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A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL SECURITY LEGISLATION ON THE AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN PROGRAM IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

A Thesis

Submitted by

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CHAPTER I

PURPOSE AND METHOD

This thesis is an attempt to present an analysis of the effects of Social Security Legislation on one phase of Public Assistance -- the Aid to Dependent Children Program -- in Rhode Island.

Purpose of the Study. The purpose of this study is (1) to compare the content of the Rhode Island Mothers' Aid law, which was the basis for the Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children law, with that Aid to Dependent Children law; (2) to determine what effects Social Security Legislation has had on the formulation of policies, structure and supervision of the present Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children program; and (3) to analyze current procedures in operation to discover whether advances have been made in the Rhode Island program beyond the requisites of the Federal Government.

In order to achieve this purpose, certain limitations have been intentionally placed by the writer upon the scope of this work. The study was limited to research within the central office of the State Department of Social Welfare, where statistics, documents and manuals for the whole department were available. This information was supplemented by books, pamphlets, journals, bulletins and monographs, noted in the bibliography, as well as by personal interviews with local directors of public welfare and administrative assistants in the State Department of Social Welfare.

This study is based on a belief that careful observation and analysis of selected administrative policies and procedures are effective measures

for determining what is happening to children under the Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children program. It is an attempt to present illustrative material which will bring into focus aspects of the program which are representative of the whole program. Stress is, therefore, placed on the development of the Rhode Island program and problems involved in its present operation which are the result of administrative regulation and Social Security legislation.

CHAPTER II

RHODE ISLAND MOTHERS' AID LAW

The first purpose of this thesis is to compare the content of the Rhode Island Mothers' Aid and Aid to Dependent Children laws. It is therefore necessary to discuss completely what is embodied in each.

The history of the Mothers' Aid movement in the United States shows that the White House Conference of 1909, establishing the principle that economic necessity alone is insufficient cause to deprive a child of family life, indicated for the first time, in many states, the possibility of allowing mothers with dependent children to receive assistance in their homes in contrast to the policy of placing dependent children in institutions.

In Rhode Island the Mothers' Aid law was first passed at the January session of the Legislature in 1923,[1] after two unsuccessful attempts for such passage had been made.

Object of the Act. This Act was to be liberally construed[2] and its object was to provide aid for mothers of dependent children. The word "mother" was to apply to all mothers with residence of three years in the State, whether or not they were citizens; and included anyone standing *in loco parentis* to any child who came within the age limits.[3] In the original law

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1 R.I. P.L., 1923, Ch. 455.
2 Ibid., s. 1.
3 Ibid., s. 3.

citizenship of the mother and children was a requirement,[4] but this section was later amended to allow mothers of alien birth, with dependent children born in the United States or whose children were citizens through a naturalized father or mother, to receive assistance, providing there was proof of residence consistent with the law.[5]

Age of Children. The law was set up to care for dependent children who were fourteen years of age or under, or under sixteen if still attending school, whose mothers were without resources, widows, or whose living husbands were totally incapacitated by reason of chronic illness or insanity or imprisoned for long terms.[6] Deserted wives could not receive assistance unless an application had been made for the issuance of a warrant for non-support, and it was then necessary to wait for a period of two years after the desertion had occurred.[7]

Local Mothers' Aid Board. The law provided that a board be created in every town or city where the program was to be put into operation,[8] but did not make the provisions of the law mandatory on all cities and towns until 1935.[9]

Application for Assistance. Applications were to be made to the local directors of the mothers' aid boards and forwarded to the State Bureau of Mothers' Aid.[10]

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4 Ibid., s. 6.
5 Ibid., s. 6.
6 R.I. State Public Welfare Commission, Digest of Mothers' Aid Law, November, 1928, S. 1.
7 Ibid., s. VIII
8 R.I. P.L., 1923, Ch. 455, s. 2.
9 R.I. P.L., 1935, Ch. 2193, s. 9.
10 R.I. P.L., 1923, Ch. 455, s. 2.

Investigation. The local board, as set up in each city or town, was required to investigate resources, "fitness" of the mother, take all lawful means to compel all persons bound to support the mother to do so, endeavor to secure employment for her, refer her to another agency if possible, review all active cases at least once a year, and was to be governed by the rules and regulations of the State Bureau of Mothers' Aid.[11] These investigations could be made either in cooperation with the state workers or independently.

Granting of Assistance. If investigation revealed that the mother was capable and fit, mentally, morally and physically, the board had the power to grant assistance to her.[12]

Amount of Assistance. No maximum amount of grant to a family was stipulated in the law, and the state and localities were to divide the total expenditures on an equal basis.[13]

Discontinuance of Assistance. At any time, if the board decided to withdraw a grant, the assistance could be discontinued, notification sent to the State Bureau, and no recourse was provided for the former recipient.

Removal. This law provided that in cases of removal from one city or town within the state, assistance could be recovered for the family by the city or town in which they then resided, from the city or town of previous residence.[14]

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11 Ibid., s. 14.
12 Ibid., s. 3.
13 Ibid., s. 15.
14 Ibid., s. 16.

Under this law, no one could be deemed a pauper because of benefits derived from it.[15]

In considering these points, it is established that Rhode Island had a Mothers' Aid law which was definitely set up for mothers of dependent children, with emphasis placed on the mother. This program ranked high and, according to United States standards, stood second to Massachusetts for liberality in the entire country.[16]

With the passage of the Social Security Act in August, 1935, indicating the possibility of federal participation, if a state plan could be approved, Rhode Island was anxious to avail itself of federal reimbursement and submitted a plan which was based on the Mothers' Aid law of 1923 as amended. This plan did not comply with federal requirements from many standpoints, especially from the legal aspects in regard to residence, citizenship, "fitness" of the mother and the unqualified clause in relation to the status of "in loco parentis". Neither did it conform with the federal point of view in its regulations about restricting the expenditures of family funds and limiting assistance to mothers with more than one child.[17]

It was finally decided to draft an entirely new law and to submit a new plan. The new law was passed in a special session of the Legislature in December, 1936, approved by the Social Security Board in February, 1937, and the first grants in the State became effective with payments retroactive to January 1, 1937.[18]

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15 Ibid., s. 3.

16 Grace Abbott, "Recent Trends in Mothers' Aid," Social Service Review, 8:191-210, June, 1934.

17 R.I. State Public Welfare Commission, Digest of Mothers' Aid Law, November, 1928, S. VII.

18 R.I. State Dept.of Public Welfare, Third Annual Report, Jan., 1938, p.200.

CHAPTER III

AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN LAW IN RHODE ISLAND

Under this new law, which was entitled the Aid to Dependent Children Act, reimbursement to the State by the federal government was made possible. When first enacted, the federal law provided reimbursement on a one-third basis up to a maximum of $18.00 monthly for the first child and $12.00 monthly for each succeeding child. In January, 1940, this reimbursement was increased from one-third to one-half.

Object. The object of the Rhode Island law was to provide aid to dependent children on a liberal basis and to include any needy child under the age of eighteen[1] if he were regularly attending school. It provided care for such a child if he were deprived of parental support or care because of death, continued absence from the home, or physical or mental incapacity of a parent, providing he was living with a relative in a place of residence maintained by such a relative[2] as his or her home.

Until the 1943 session of the Legislature, a residence requirement of one year immediately preceding the date of application was necessary. By the Act of 1943 all residence requirements were abolished.

Application for Assistance. When this law was first enacted, provision was made for the establishment of local bureaus or boards in every city and

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1 R.I. G.L., 1938, Ch. 58, s. 2, as amended P.L. 1940, Ch. 852.
2 Ibid.

town. Each bureau or board was to have a director who was responsible for taking applications for assistance and forwarding them to the State Department of Public Welfare.[3] After the Aid to Dependent Children program had become integrated with the other Social Security categories, the responsibility for applications was taken from the local directors and placed within the Department of Social Welfare (July, 1940). Under this plan, which is the present one, application may be made in any one of the district offices or in the central office of the State Department.

Investigation. Under this law all applications should be investigated promptly and the investigation should include a visit to the home of the child and of the person who is to have the custody of the child during the time in which assistance is granted.[4]

Granting of Assistance. Upon the completion of the investigation, eligibility is determined as provided in the law and in the policies, and assistance is granted, under the supervision of the State Department of Social Welfare.[5]

Amount of Assistance. The law provides that the amount of assistance should be determined after consideration of all resources and necessary expenditures of the family has been made. This is determined on a case work basis in accordance with the rules and regulations of the department.[6]

Periodic Reconsideration and Changes in Amount of Assistance. The law states that all grants should be reconsidered as frequently as indicated by the rules and regulations of the State Department of Social Welfare; and

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3 Ibid., s. 6.
4 R.I. G.L., 1938, Ch. 58, s. 7.
5 Ibid., s. 8.
6 Ibid., s. 5.

after such reconsideration, the amount can be changed or the grant entirely withdrawn if the circumstances warrant such action.[7]

Right of Appeal. Any person aggrieved by the failure of the Department to render aid as provided by the law, or failure to approve or reject an application within a reasonable time after receiving such application, has a right of appeal to the Director of the State Department of Social Welfare, or to any person designated by him to have the authority to act upon any appeal in such matters.[8]

Removal. There are no restrictions on removal at this time, and a person may move without requesting permission from any local director. The Department of Social Welfare must be notified of such a change, but no limitations are placed on the family.[9]

No person receiving benefits under this Act is considered a pauper.

A discussion of the details of these two state laws would not be complete without examining the content of the Social Security Act and the sections of it which influenced Rhode Island legislation in regard to dependent children.

To do this, an analysis of Title IV of this Act must be made. The following stipulations are mandatory in any state plan for Aid to Dependent Children. (1) The provisions must be in effect in all political subdivisions of the state, and, if administered by them, be mandatory on them. (2) Financial participation must be provided by the state. (3) A single

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7 Ibid., s. 9.
8 Ibid., s. 10.
9 R.I. G.L., 1938, as amended P.L. 1940, Ch. 852, s. 11.

state agency must be established to administer the plan or to supervise the administration of the plan. (4) A fair hearing must be granted to any individual whose claim, with respect to Aid to Dependent Children, has been denied. (5) Provisions for efficient administration and maintenance of standards of personnel as are found necessary for the proper and efficient operation of the plan must be made. (6) The state agency must make reports as necessary to the Board. (7) In determining the amount of assistance, consideration must be made of any other income and resources of the child or person claiming the assistance. (8) A plan to provide safeguards which restrict the use or disclosure of information concerning applicants and recipients must be initiated and maintained.[10]

In addition to this, the Social Security Board will approve any plan which fulfills these requirements but which places no restriction on residence which might deprive a child who has resided in the state for one year immediately preceding the application or who was born within the state, if that child's mother has resided in the state for one year.[11]

Reimbursement can be made to the state if a dependent child who is a "needy child under the age of sixteen or under eighteen, if regularly attending school," is deprived of parental support by reason of death, continued absence, physical or mental incapacity of a parent, and is residing in his home with a "father, mother, grandparent, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, uncle or aunt in a place of residence maintained by him."[12]

It further stipulates that such assistance must be paid in cash.

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10 P.L. #271, 74th Cong. s. 402, H.R. 7260.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.

In examining these two state laws in the light of the Social Security Act, it is then determined that there is a direct influence of the federal law on the composition of the Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children law. This law provides care for dependent children and not primarily for mothers with children. It establishes one state agency to care for the entire supervision and administration of the program, but maintains an appreciation for the point of view of the local boards. Absence of local participation relieves the local communities of the financial burden, and also is an effort toward the establishment of unified policies and procedures.

In order to understand the importance of this, an example of lack of unity under the Mothers' Aid program is cited. Although the letter of the law allowed grants to be made to all mothers, it was very difficult for one State Director to supervise all the localities and impossible for him to act on any cases unless they were referred to the state office. In an annual report, one local director says,

> ...and this year I shall have the law amended whereby mothers' aid may be given only to women whose husbands have died, become physically or mentally incapacitated or were sent to prison or deserted, while having a domicile or residence in this state.[13]

This statement indicated not only his attitude in regard to eligibility but the interpretation of the program which he would give to his community.

Such lack of uniformity in interpretation was not true, as a whole, under ADC* but was found to be quite difficult to control. The directors interpreted the law, in some instances, in terms of the old poor law and refused to request interpretative assistance from the state workers. Legally

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13 Providence Journal, May 22, 1926, editorial section.

* Aid to Dependent Children.

abolishing local participation remedied this.

Specific comparisons of the two laws for dependent children can now be made.

The Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children law is now set up to care for a child who is deprived of any kind of parental support and does not include mothers alone.

Applications for assistance are received by a representative of the State Department of Social Welfare in the area offices or in the central office, and not by a local director. Under the Mothers' Aid statute, local officials had almost complete powers: could accept applications, approve, deny and withdraw assistance and notify the State Department after the action had been taken. There is evidence to show that under this plan, as well as under the first Aid to Dependent Children plan, when directors had greater powers, some applications were never forwarded to the State representative and therefore were rejected without any review of the circumstances.

Investigations, as well as periodic reviews, are now made under the supervision of the State Department of Social Welfare.

Granting of assistance is considered only after complete investigation of resources has been made and, if eligibility is determined, money payments are made without any further efforts to find employment for the mother or to refer her to another agency.

Under the Aid to Dependent Children law, assistance can be temporary as well as permanent. Since the standards of assistance are now the same for all public assistance categories in the State, this has not been so

significant as far as the recipients have been concerned, but has affected the state reimbursements. Under the Mothers' Aid law, if a person was waiting to be accepted, temporary assistance was given by the local director of public aid entirely from local funds. This was in the form of food orders and was seldom sufficient to care for even minimum needs. Under the present plan, cash is provided during the waiting period through general public assistance, which means only thirty per cent reimbursement to the State from the locality.

The question of in loco parentis, which was so confusing under the Mothers' Aid law, has definitely been cleared and a grant may be given to any relative who cares for the child in his own home. Reimbursement from the government is available only when a child is living with a relative as specified in the Social Security Act.

ADC does not place any restriction on cash awards. Any person who is deemed eligible under this Act should be capable of caring for her own money and no restrictions have been placed on the expenditure of it. Nor is there any investigation of the "fitness" of the mother. She should be capable of maintaining her home, but all reference to her "worthiness" has been abolished.

Residence within the State or within any town is not required for any specified period of time. There is no question of settlement.

The residence requirement in the earlier law and the requirement in the first Aid to Dependent Children law, which has now been amended,[14] is perhaps the clause which caused as much abuse among the directors and as many

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14 R.I. G.L., 1938, Ch. 58, s. 11.

hardships to the recipients as any other. In one town, evidence was found that a director refused to allow a family to stay in the town after they had moved in, due to the fact that at the end of one year responsibility for one-third of the payment would rest with that town and the case would, in all probability, be a long-time one. He arranged for eviction of the family from their tenement and from the town to an adjacent one. Because of the proximity of the towns, the story went ahead of the family and caused a great deal of hardship for the children in the school and in the community. It is the hope of those administering the program that abolishing this requirement has eliminated all such abuse.

The citizenship clause, which caused difficulties from the administrative point of view and limited the services of the program, too, has been abolished.

ADC provides for the right of appeal and fair hearing. Under the Mothers' Aid law, applicants and recipients were under the complete power of the local directors, and had no legal basis for recourse for any unfair action which might be taken. For the first time in the State, there is a breaking away from the old Elizabethan Poor Law and an indication of a person's real right to public assistance is made.

From the above discussion it can be determined that the two state laws have many similarities in the topics included in their content, but a distinct change in emphasis is revealed.

CHAPTER IV

POLICIES--RHODE ISLAND MOTHERS' AID PROGRAM

It is now possible to turn to the second part of the purpose of this thesis--to determine what effects Social Security legislation has had on the formulation of policies, structure, and supervision of the present Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children program.

As has been pointed out, when the passage of the Social Security Act made possible reimbursements to the states, Rhode Island's Mothers' Aid law, although it was among the four top states in the United States, had to be repealed to comply with federal requirements. Its program was not broad enough to be accepted until the changes in the law, previously stated, had been effected. It is important to note here that the changes which have been cited thus far are changes in actual content of the law and give only an indication of the many changes made in structure and policy of the Aid to Dependent Children program.

To understand the changes in formulation of policy which have been an outgrowth of Social Security legislation, it is necessary to consider the policies which were formulated from the law for the operation of the Mothers' Aid program.

Applications. The policy set forth in regard to applications followed explicitly the letter of the law and stated that all applications should be made to the local directors and forwarded to the State Bureau.[1]

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1 R.I. State Public Welfare Commission, Digest of Mothers' Aid Law, Nov., 1928, s. 4.

Amounts of Assistance. Amounts of assistance were determined by social workers in the State Bureau of Mothers' Aid in accordance with their budgets based on family welfare standards. In computing the actual grant, they took into consideration the standards of living of the family, as well as "the standards of those self-supporting families in the neighborhood."[2] These amounts could be revised by the local directors if they did not meet with their approval.

Investigation. Initial investigations, as well as periodic visits to the homes for the purpose of re-determining eligibility, could be made by the local directors.[3] Such visits were supplemented by visits from the state workers, thus creating a great deal of duplication.

Mothers with One Child. As a matter of policy, a mother with one child was not considered eligible. It was felt that employment should be obtained by such a mother, and if she were unable to do this, the local director should assist her in this matter.[4]

Mothers with Illegitimate Children. If a mother who was receiving assistance had an illegitimate child, assistance was taken away for a probationary period. She was referred to a family agency for supervision and if, at the end of a supervisory period, it was decided that her conduct was acceptable, the grant was reinstated.

Mothers were encouraged to seek part-time employment and, if this was not done, in cases where it was felt to be justifiable, it was demanded that a physical examination be made to determine the physical fitness of the

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2 Ibid., s. 14.
3 Ibid., s. 22.
4 Ibid., s. 7.

mother for such employment.[5] This policy, however, limited a "mother with a number of young children" in her employment activities by stating that she should not be "allowed" to work.

A list of weekly expenditures was to be made to the local directors so that an account of the individual mothers' budgets might be kept.[6] It was hoped that, besides checking on her expenses, some help could be given to her in management if such help was indicated.

Medical Assistance. The policy provided that medical assistance be given, in the grant, for mothers and children. Any such needs for the father or any other relative were to be covered entirely by the local department of public welfare. Medical needs of incapacitated fathers were considered only if these men were in hospitals or sanitaria and then assistance was provided by either the locality or the state, according to the type of institutional care recommended.[7]

In the application of these policies, there was some evidence that individual attention was emphasized, but as far as the procedures were concerned the tendency appeared to be strict adherence to the policies which were less liberal than the law, with the intention of restricting the assistance to a selected group.

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5 Ibid., s. 10.
6 Ibid., s. 17.
7 Ibid., s. 9.

CHAPTER V

POLICIES--RHODE ISLAND AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN PROGRAM

Passage of the Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children law and acceptance of the State plan by the Social Security Board meant that the program could be put into operation.

It is important to consider carefully what actually was formulated in Rhode Island as a plan for Aid to Dependent Children under the approval of the federal government. Because of its scope, every detail of the plan is not to be considered here. This work will cover only those phases which have bearing on the purpose of this thesis.

It is not the purpose of the federal government to superimpose regulations on any state, but if a state presents a plan and wishes to obtain reimbursement, there are certain minimum requirements which must be met. The plan of operation should include clear definitions of terms to be used in relation to the functional activities by which the provisions of the plan are to be administered. If the state, in its plan, meets these requirements and wishes to make its own policies more liberal, there is no objection, providing payment is made by the state to the amount of one hundred per cent of the monies in excess of the reimbursable maxima. This does not encourage liberality, and tends to restrict and penalize the more liberal states by forcing them to bear either one hundred per cent of the deductible, non-reimbursable items or divide them with the local towns and cities.

Ever since the days of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the

problem of fairness in distribution has been perplexing, and a study of the history of such disbursements to the states on the basis of fairness shows some extraordinary procedures.

In adopting its definitions, a state agency is urged to adopt or extend its provisions on as broad a basis as will provide a sound and reasonable foundation for administration within statutory and financial limitations. Although the use of federal funds is limited by the specifications of the Federal Social Security Act, and by the regulations and statements of principle which have been established, provisions of a state plan not subject to federal matching need not be so restricted. By providing a broad basis for sharing financial responsibility, federal funds may enable the states not only to make more adequate provision for certain groups who are eligible for categorical assistance, but also to release state and local funds for other purposes contributing to the general welfare of the entire population.[1]

The philosophy in this thinking is, therefore, not to penalize but to help other large groups, outside the limits of categorical assistance, to receive adequate amounts.

A plan must be flexible, kept current, and should be sound in its method of operation.

Definitions in the ADC Plan. Definitions in this plan must be carefully worded and must have legal basis in the statutes. In regard to some phases the law is clear enough to be interpreted without further definitions, but the plan clarifies any questions and makes for unity of administration through adequate and accurate interpretation.

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1 Social Security Board Bulletin, Cir. #9, May 1, 1940.

Dependent Child. This definition follows very closely the statement in the law and means a needy child under the age of eighteen, if attending school, otherwise sixteen,[2] who has been deprived of parental support or care by reason of the death, continued absence from the home, or physical or mental incapacity of a parent. This child should be living in a place of residence maintained by a relative.[3]

The Rhode Island plan exacts that proof of the status which is claimed in respect to the child should be obtained but flexibility maintained in carrying out the administration of the policy. This is especially true in regard to the clause--continued absence from the home--in the hope of not penalizing any child who might be entitled to this form of assistance. Continued absence from the home may be clarified to mean divorce, desertion, separation or imprisonment, and indicates the state's willingness to recognize the role of the father not only in the home but absent from it. The length of time of absence is also important. The early policy of ADC stressed the length of the absence, but now three months absence is sufficiently long enough to allow a grant to be given. All such cases are determined on a case work basis.

Granting of Assistance. Under the definitions included in this plan, if a child attends school and unquestionable proof has been provided through the mother, the child may receive assistance for the entire month in which he has his eighteenth birthday. Similarly, assistance is always provided through the month in which there is a change--i.e., death, attainment of age, etc. Under this plan, assistance may be provided for a child who is not yet born,

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2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.

whether this is a first child or not, on submission of a statement from the physician to the effect that the mother is pregnant.

All grants under the Aid to Dependent Children program are based on the "standards of assistance" which are set up to place maxima on such items as food, rent, fuel and clothing. Any of these maximum amounts may be increased at the discretion of the area supervisors under the chief case work supervisor.

Citizenship. In this plan, there is no regulation in regard to citizenship. This eliminates any confusion in regard to eligibility and shows definitely the progress or change in philosophy from the time of the report of the Children's Commission in 1925, which made very clear that the provision of the Mothers' Aid Act was to include a selected group of mothers and not all mothers in need, and that any privileges granted should be reserved for one hundred per cent Americans.[4]

Residence. Abolishing all residence requirements certainly is in agreement with federal thinking. Under this provision, too, visits out of the state are allowed for an indefinite period of time. The 1943 amendments to the Act have liberalized this further. There is no restriction on residence after the grant has been made or prior to the initial grant.

Institutions. Until 1943, the plan provided that no child or person included in the ADC grant could receive assistance if he remained in an institution longer than a period of three months, even though his stay was for the purpose of obtaining medical care. Now, if the grant is within the federally reimbursed maximum, it may be continued to pay for such medical care.

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4 Henry J. Crepeau, Rhode Island: A History of Child Welfare Planning. P. 37.

Liens. The plan provides that no liens or collections may be placed on any property of the applicant or recipient, and a recipient may live in property and retain it if the carrying charges do not exceed a reasonable rent and if the equity is not over $5000. Reasonable rent is determined on an individual basis in accordance with the standards of assistance set up by the Department in 1942, and includes interest on mortgage, taxes, water and insurance.

Assets. The plan does limit the amount of liquid assets to $500.

Employment. A mother may accept employment on a part time basis, but is not encouraged to do so. The policy of the Department is to provide adequate assistance for the parent and children within their own home.

Throughout the plan there is indication of a careful case work approach to all problems. This is noted especially in regard to fathers, in the home, who are incapacitated. The importance of the father's role in the family is recognized. He is included in the grant and the check can be made out and mailed to him if the family wishes to have this done. It provides, too, for some plan of rehabilitation for him in accordance with the recommendation of his physician.

Provisions for an incapacitated mother are not quite so specific, but are made in accordance with the individual situation.

Relatives. Relative resources are investigated, but the agency places stress on the importance of knowing what the family ties and relationships are, rather than attempting to obtain support from persons unable or unwilling to give such support. This is brought out very clearly in the policy in regard to step-parents. If they are able, from the financial point of view, to care for any child in the home but are unwilling to do this, ADC may be

granted.

Medical Care. Medical care in institutions has been discussed. If other medical care is needed, the plan provides that grants may be increased up to the limits of the federally reimbursable maximum in order to meet the needs. Needs in excess of this are to be shared with the localities from the funds provided for general public assistance. In cooperation with the Division of Maternal and Child Health in the State Department of Health, obstetrical care can be given to prospective ADC mothers.

Confidential Nature of Material. The plan provides for safeguarding the case material by instructing the personnel in such methods as are deemed necessary. In this regard the confidential nature of work means considerable interpretation which was not a part of the Mothers' Aid program. Although every effort to keep the records confidential was made, as late as 1937 lists of recipients names, kinds of assistance and amounts received were posted in the town halls.

Fair Hearing. Perhaps the most obvious change from poor law standards comes with the stipulation of the right to a fair hearing. In the plan there are specific definitions which help the agency to distinguish clearly the point at which a complaint becomes an appeal for a fair hearing and whether or not the request for a review may be handled without a formal hearing but determined on a case work basis. It is the intention of the Social Security Board[5] that when an individual applies for assistance he should know his rights. When the matter becomes a question of whether or not a request should be handled through an informal complaint or through a hearing before a state agency, the choice must remain with the individual.

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5 Social Security Bulletin, Cir. #9, August 10, 1942.

In order to exercise this right of choice, the individual must have a knowledge of what is involved and excellent interpretation, to him, of his rights is needed.

The State procedure is as follows:-

On each application and notice sent to an applicant or recipient, there must be a written notification of his right to appeal.

A request for a hearing must be sent to the Director of the Department of Social Welfare on a special form. The Director, within fifteen working days after receipt of the request, must notify the applicant of the time and place for the review. A board is formed, but the hearing is held on an informal basis. The purpose is explained, new evidence may be given, no member of the staff who has previously rendered a decision on the case shall constitute part of the board but may be present at the hearing. When all the information has been presented, the Director may close the hearing and notify the applicant within five days of the decision in writing. There should be no publication of the hearing, and a re-hearing can be given at the discretion of the Director.[6]

Finally, other than its sections on administration, the only material not presented is that in regard to standards for personnel. The plan finds its legal basis for these provisions in the Civil Service Law of 1939,[7] and emphasizes standards for recruitment, performance, development of staff, and such personnel practices as vacation, sick, military and educational leaves. Full authority for final decisions in such matters rests with the Civil

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6 State Plan Material, Vol. II, in the files of the R.I. State Department of Social Welfare.

7 R.I. P.L., 1939, Ch. 661.

Service Commission, but the State Department of Social Welfare, as the appointing authority, has the right to make recommendations and to participate in the planning.

Such a broad program and one that has expanded so rapidly indicates the necessity for careful guidance and supervision. Efficient operation demands a sound basis of organization.

CHAPTER VI

STRUCTURE OF THE RHODE ISLAND AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN PROGRAM

Under the Mothers' Aid plan, a bureau was set up to supervise the work which was done by the local directors in respect to the families to whom assistance was rendered. The bureau was to provide for regulations, have access to any records and data maintained by the towns, and to include in its annual report work done by the agents and local directors in respect to all the families assisted.[1]

The Aid to Dependent Children program places the responsibility for administration and operation of the state plan in the State Department of Social Welfare.

Organization. Under the Mothers' Aid administration, the State Director of Mothers' Aid was directly responsible to the State Public Welfare Commission, which, in turn, was directly responsible to the Governor. The Director of the Bureau acted not only as a supervisor to the immediate staff, social workers and clerical staff, but acted in an advisory capacity to the local directors of public welfare in the cities and towns in which the program was in operation.[2] She was also given access to all records of the state home and school for children, and the employees of the "placing out department" were to cooperate with her in every respect in carrying out all

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1 R.I. P.L., 1923, Ch. 455, s. 13.
2 Ibid., s. 10.

the provisions of the Act.[3]

The Director acted as general organizer in the field of local operations, as well as administrator of all the rules and regulations, at a state level.

From 1923 until 1937, the Department expanded to three social workers, bookkeeping department and clerical staff. (See chart, page 30.)

In 1937, after the state plan had been accepted by the Social Security Board, the Bureau became a part of the State Department of Public Welfare in the Division of Social Security. The Director of Mothers' Aid became the Deputy Chief of the Division of Social Security which combined Old Age Assistance and Aid to Dependent Children. Besides being assistant to the Chief of the Division and advisor of the local directors of public welfare, she was responsible for the supervision of seven social workers, four office assistants, a bookkeeping and clerical staff. (See chart, page 31.)

In 1939, when so many other states throughout the country were enacting social legislation, Rhode Island was one of seven states to establish a new public welfare act.[4]

> By the end of 1938, Public Assistance had passed beyond the stage of primary concern with legislation and initial organization and had begun to center on detailed planning for the development of more adequate organization, improved procedures and greater recognition of service responsibilities of state and local agencies. There was amending and strengthening of laws.[5]

As a result of this Administrative Act of 1939, authority was given for the integration of all types of public assistance under the guidance of one administrator. This administrator was to be directly responsible to the

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3 Ibid., s. 10.
4 R.I. P.L., 1939, Ch. 660.
5 Jane M. Hoey, "Our Community Stake in the Development of Social Security Program," The Family, 18:295-298, January, 1938.

Director of the State Department of Social Welfare, who, in turn, would be responsible to the Governor. The following plan of operation was then established. Under the administrator there should be one chief case work supervisor, responsible for the casework procedures for the whole Division: five areas, each with an area supervisor responsible both for administration of the program and supervision of the local staffs, as well as for interpretation to the community; and case work supervisors and social workers as required to carry out the case work and to be responsible for the supervision of integrated case loads, including all categories of assistance. The Deputy Chief, in charge of Aid to Dependent Children, became the Consultant for ADC and was directly responsible to the chief case work supervisor and the administrator. The consultant had direct contact with the area and case work supervisors in regard to policies and procedures and case work problems in ADC in all of the five main sub-divisions. The consultant was also responsible for a portion of the program in regard to staff development and in-service training. This program, as described, has remained in operation until the present time. (See chart, page 32.)

The Social Security Board has recommended decentralization. Such decentralization has been accomplished and has combined with it centralization of disbursements, which has protected the confidential nature of the material and has made for increased effectiveness in operation.

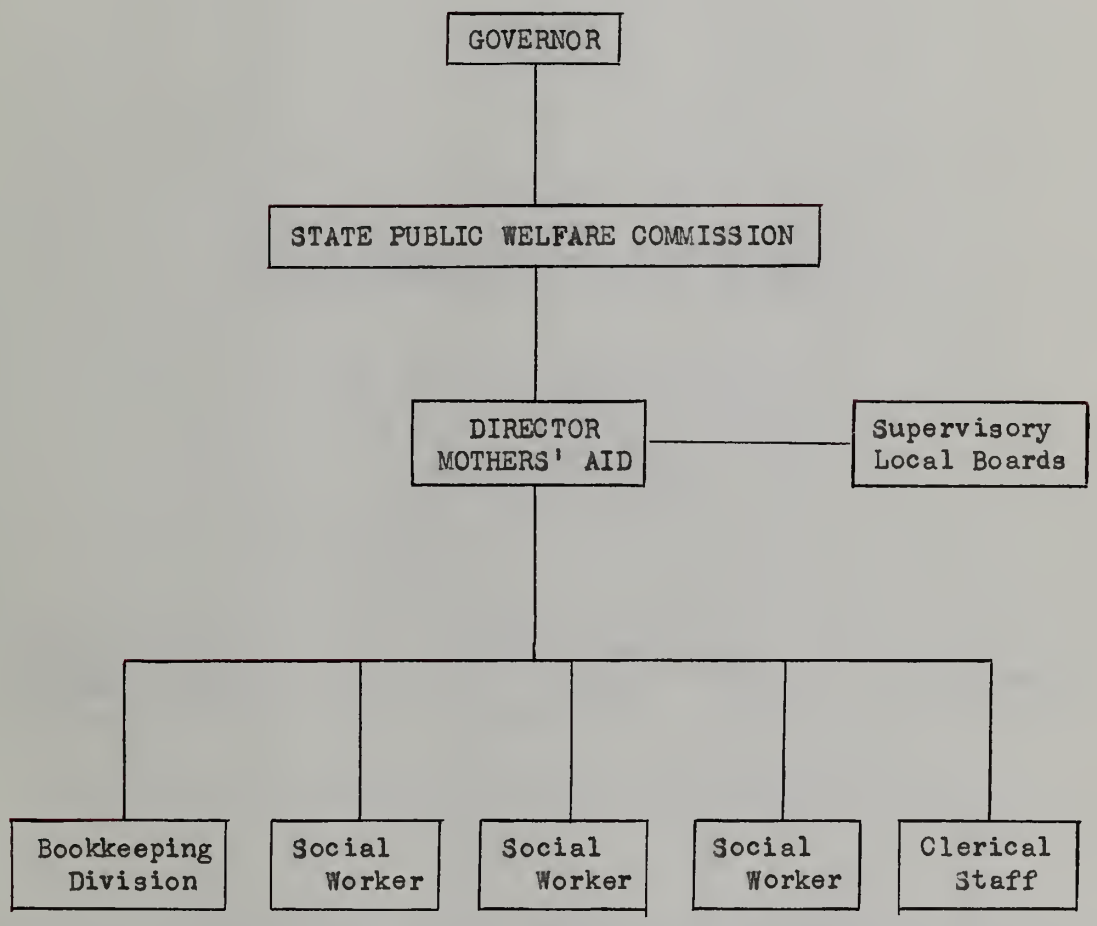
In reviewing this entire picture, the changes in structure, which have been both an outgrowth of and a contribution to the development of the organization, can be traced. There is a change from a set-up whereby, as late as June, 1942, payments were being made to recipients from local offices to a plan of centralization of disbursements; as well as a change from an

organization of state administration, without complete control over all the political subdivisions, to a plan of organization where there is state supervision, administration and control, and where lines of authority are clearly defined.

CHART I

MOTHERS' AID BUREAU

1923-1937

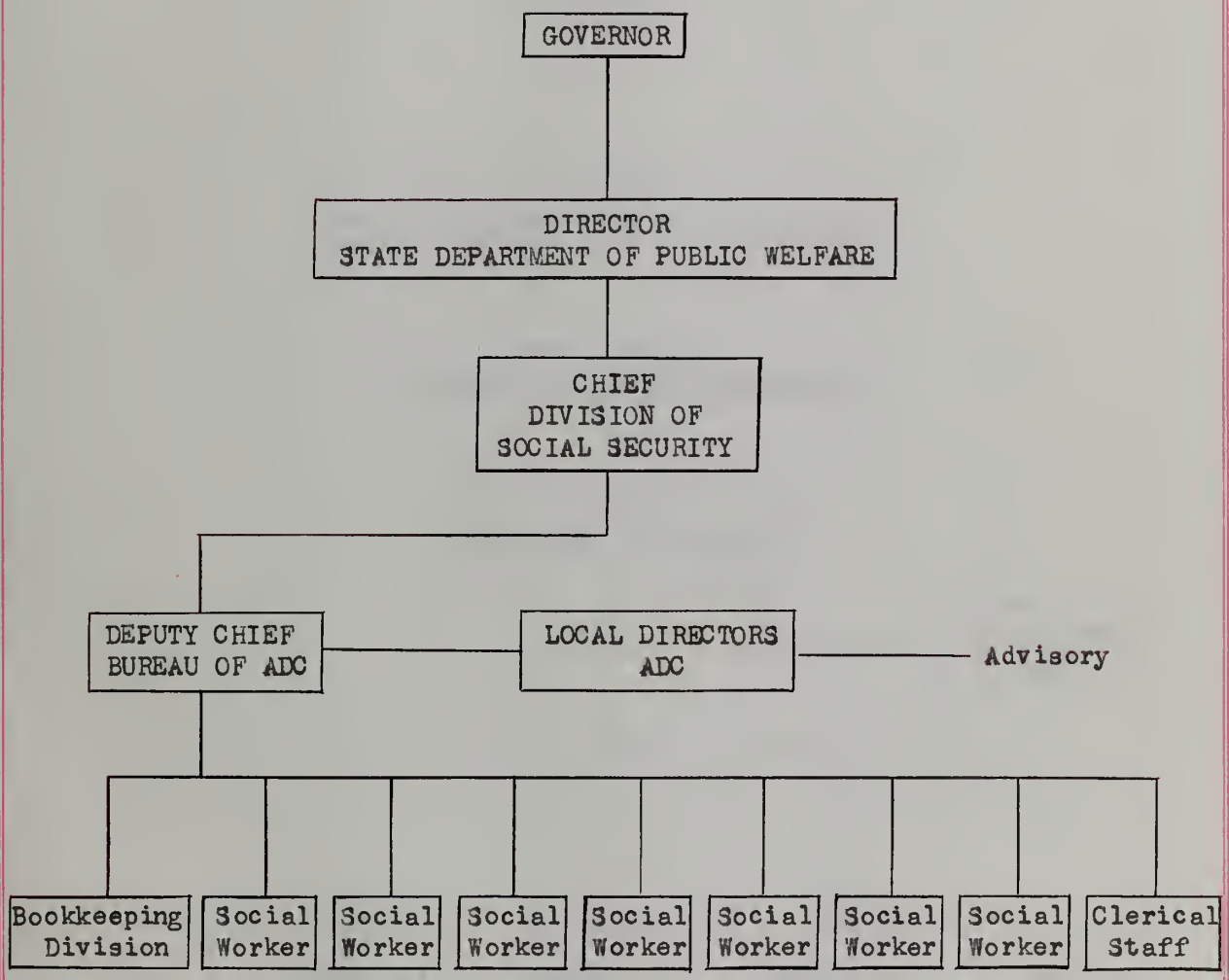


Source:- Rhode Island Public Welfare Commission, Annual Report Bureau of Mothers' Aid, 1923-1937.

CHART II

BUREAU: AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN

1937-1939

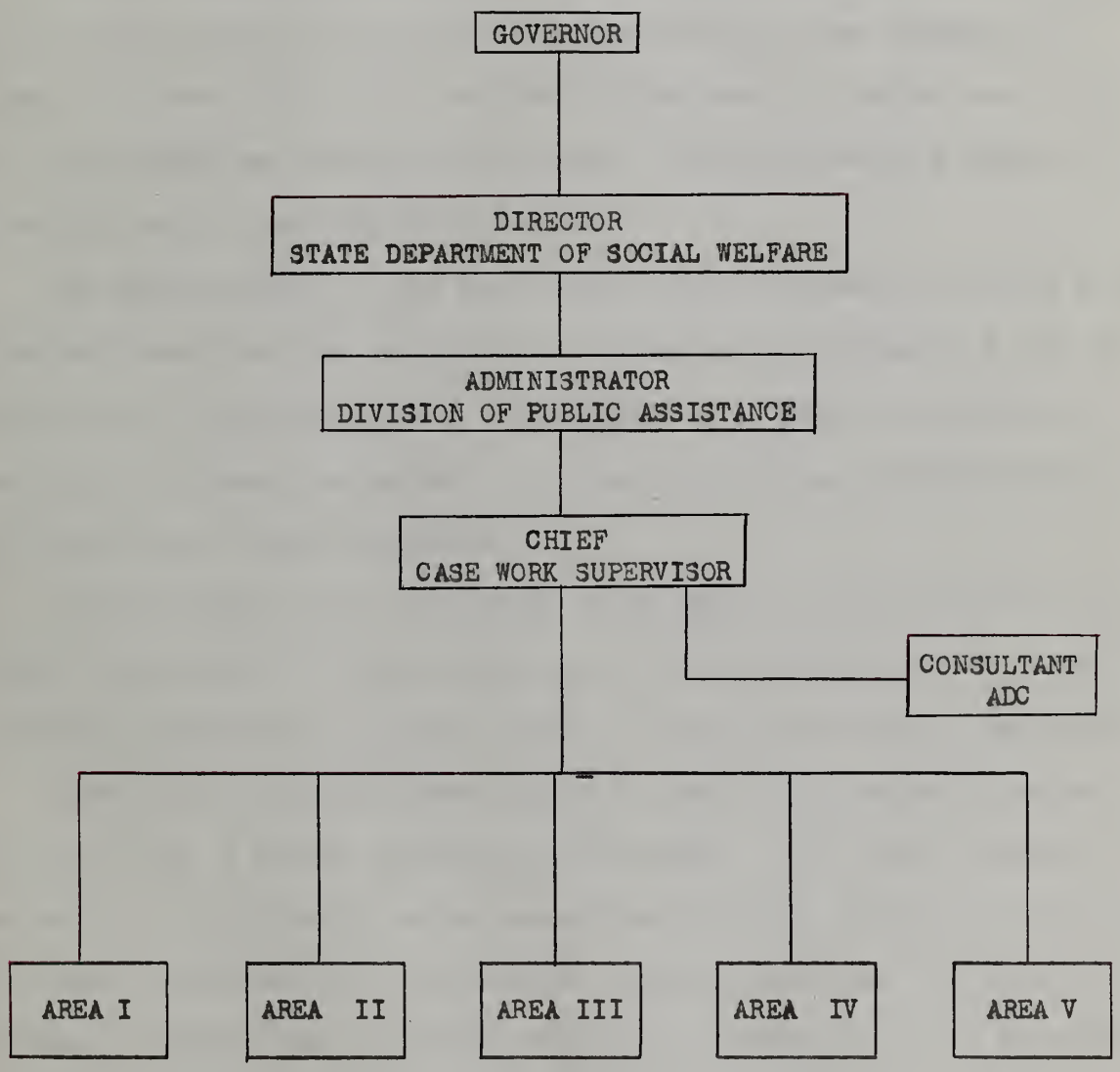


Source:- Rhode Island Division of Social Security, Annual Report to Department of Public Welfare, 1937-1939.

CHART III

AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN

1939-1943



Source:- Administrative Reports, Division of Public Assistance, Rhode Island State Department of Social Welfare, 1939-1943.

CHAPTER VII

SUPERVISION

In any program which is state-wide in operation, evidence of clarification of plan material and continual interpretation to the community is needed. In order to be sure that the policies and regulations are carried out by the state as indicated in its plan, the Social Security Board provides for regular administrative reviews.

The administrators of the Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children program have recognized the need for case reviews and have planned a type of review which is completed under the supervision of each area supervisor. According to evidence presented, these have not been too successful and this procedure is now being reorganized.

Before attempting an explanation of the kinds of administrative review which are made under the supervision of the Social Security Board, certain underlying principles in the philosophy of this process need to be expanded.

Supervision, from the federal point of view,[1] is a method of stimulating the states to higher standards of efficiency. It is also concerned with whether or not efficiency in the expenditure of funds, adequate standards of assistance, state and local cooperation and interpretation, and equitable methods of finance can be combined into any one program, as well as whether or not,-

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1 Grace Abbott, Public Assistance, American Principles and Policies, p. 825.

> ...at the very minimum, a continuous study of relief administration by a federal department or agency, preferably coordinated with a state and local agency, would not contribute to the research awaiting many problems.[2]

In the early part of 1941, the first administrative review was initiated in Rhode Island under the auspices of the Social Security Board. This included all cases retroactive to January 1, 1940. Prior to that date, all cases were read by the federal auditors during the process of the regular fiscal review. Under the new plan, samples of case loads in each of the five areas were taken. The number of cases scheduled depended a great deal on the size of the case load and on what aspects of the program were to be emphasized. For example, in one area twenty per cent of cases accepted during the specific review period, five per cent of the continuously active cases, fifty per cent of the rejected cases, and twenty per cent of the discontinued cases were chosen. The reviewer obtained her information directly from the case records and from interviews with the area and case work supervisors, as well as from workers and local directors of public welfare. This method, combining analysis of records with observation and direct interviews, gave a good indication of how the program was operating in each area. After written reports had been submitted to the Director of the Department of Social Welfare, the area and case work supervisors directly concerned were brought together with the administrative assistants and the reviewing staff of the Social Security Board for a discussion of the analysis and the recommendations which were made. Plans for more efficient operation were then contemplated, and when these became effective the Board was notified.

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2 Ibid.

Making these reviews continuously and changing the review period progressively as each area is examined, gives an excellent opportunity to the state to observe its own organization as a whole, to discard obsolete and outmoded material, and to keep the entire personnel stimulated to continually higher standards of efficiency.

CHAPTER VIII

TRENDS IN ASSISTANCE

In order to actually determine how the facts discussed in the previous chapters have affected the operation of the Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children program, it is necessary to examine carefully certain specific statistics covering a sufficiently large portion of both the Mothers' Aid and the Aid to Dependent Children programs.

For this purpose, the following data have been selected:-

(1) Average monthly grants paid to families of dependent children in Rhode Island from 1931--May, 1943.

(2) Number of cases under care and the total amounts of expenditures from 1931--1943.

(3) Causes of dependency in active mothers' aid cases from 1933--1937.

(4) Causes of dependency in accepted applications--ADC--from 1938--1942.

(5) Reasons for discontinuing allowances under Mothers' Aid from 1933--1937, and for the period July, 1938--1942 under ADC.

(6) Age range of the children who received assistance under both programs.

(7) Case loads supervised by the social workers.

Average Monthly Allowances, 1931-1943.

In order to make the following discussion on amounts of assistance clear, reference is made to Table I, page 37. The discussion will revolve around the following:-

TABLE I

AVERAGE MONTHLY GRANTS AND CASE LOADS
RHODE ISLAND DEPENDENT CHILDREN
1930-1943

Year	Average Grant	Cases
July		
1930-31 *	$51.43	388
1931-32	49.57	455
1932-33	46.28	464
1933-34	47.84	513
1934-35	48.88	559
1935-36	50.57	570
1936-37 **	52.22	755
1937-38	48.54	927
1938-39	46.27	1140
1939-40 ***	45.32	1241
1940-41	45.36	1296
1941-42	52.45	1244
May, 1943 ****	58.42	1173

* Source:- Rhode Island Public Welfare Commission, Annual Report, Bureau of Mothers' Aid, 1930-1936.

** Rhode Island State Department of Public Welfare, Annual Report, 1937-1939.

*** Social Security Bulletin, Vol.2, #8; Vol.4, #9, p.6; Vol.5, #8, p.6, 1940-1942.

**** R.I. Welfare, State Department of Social Welfare, May, 1943.

(1) A comparison of average monthly grants for the period 1931-1943 as a whole, with specific attention paid to the extremes.

(2) A comparison of average monthly grants for the five main subdivisions of the State Department of Social Welfare.

The Mothers' Aid program was in operation in Rhode Island from January 1923-1937. During that period, the highest average monthly grant paid to families was $51.43 paid in the year 1930-1931. In July, 1937, the average monthly grant reached a peak of $52.22 when the Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children program had been in operation for six months. This, however, does not appear to be an influence of ADC because actually the Mothers' Aid standards of assistance remained in operation until April, 1937, when the consolidation of Mothers' Aid with the Division of Social Security became complete. Therefore, this high average monthly grant is more typical of averages under the earlier program than of any influence of new legislation.

For the years 1937-1941 there is a distinct decrease noted in these average monthly allowances. This decrease may be a direct result of federal legislation which limited reimbursements to the states to one-third of $18.00 monthly for the first child and one-third of $12.00 monthly for each succeeding child until January, 1940, when the reimbursement was increased to fifty per cent. Such a decrease may be attributed to the fact that in 1937 the state plan stipulated a maximum excess of $12.00 monthly over and above the federal allowance, and, although a higher amount could be given, with the approval of the Chief of the Division, there is evidence to show that this excess was rather strictly adhered to and any supplementation needed was provided through general public assistance, then known as State Unemployment Relief.

These lower amounts might reflect the strengths of power of the local directors who, in most instances, opposed liberality. Although their contributions to the program were reduced proportionately when the Aid to Dependent Children program became effective, a fear of rising costs under federal supervision, especially in rural areas, was in evidence.

There is no direct evidence to show that the increase in case load caused a decrease in average monthly grant, and there is no proof to indicate that existing grants were reduced in order to make more money available, but there is a possibility that this may have happened.

In January, 1940, when federal matching was increased to fifty per cent, more money was released to the states. However, the trend was not to take on a proportionately higher amount of cases, as can be seen in the comparatively slight increase in the number of cases from 1241 in July, 1940 to 1296 in July, 1941, but shows an increase in amounts of individual grants from $45.32 in 1940 to $45.36 in 1941 and to $52.45 monthly in 1942.

The rise in average grants from $52.45 in July, 1942 to $58.42 in May, 1943, with a decrease in case load of seventy-one cases, can be attributed directly to the fact that at this time the program was expanding to care for incapacitated fathers in the home, children over eighteen and unborn children, as well as to the effective operations of the "new standards of assistance". These standards were put into effect in January, 1942. They were to meet the increased costs of living as well as any budgetary deficiencies hitherto not covered.

It is important here to consider not only the average monthly grant but the extremes in allowances as shown in the following Table.

TABLE II

AMOUNTS OF GRANTS
EXTREMES: 1938-1942

Year	Lowest Grant	Highest Grant
1938-1939	$9	$114
1939-1940	9	114
1941-1942	9	142

Source:- R.I. Welfare, State Department of Social Welfare, June, 1939, 1940, 1942.

This Table shows the wide range and gives a more comprehensive picture of the money payments for the State as a whole.

In addition to this, it is important to show the wide variation in average monthly grants in each of the five main subdivisions of the State. These were computed for the month of April, 1943, and range as follows: $61.18, $57.02, $54.77, $53.60, $50.62.

It has been found that the lowest grants are in the rural areas. If the costs of living, together with the sizes of the families, could be compared with the average grants in these areas, the coefficients of correlation might be high.

Cases under Care and Expenditures. In 1937 there were waiting lists in almost every town.[1] When the town or city appropriations were not sufficient to meet the needs, the applications were kept in the local offices and were not forwarded to the State Director.

1 R.I. State Public Welfare Department, Third Annual Report, January, 1938.

In view of this, the increase in case load from 570 in June, 1936, to 755 in July, 1937, is not surprising. This was characteristic of the country as a whole. Although Rhode Island had not appropriated proportionately higher amounts of money during the depression years (1933-1937), neither had she withdrawn appropriations as many states had. Several towns which had reported no cases in need of Mothers' Aid prior to 1937, presented applications to the State Department of Social Welfare as soon as federal reimbursement became available, and the State plan was made mandatory on all the political subdivisions. In 1937 there were ten towns in the State which had no program of this kind, and by 1940 all had at least one active case.[2]

Not only did the applications increase, but the State expenditures over a ten year period changed, as is indicated in the following Table:

TABLE III

AMOUNTS OF STATE EXPENDITURES
FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN: 1933-1943

Year	Cases	Amount
May		
1933	464	$11,324[a]
1935	550	13,631[a]
1939	1121	51,576[b]
1941	1305	58,384[c]
1943	1173	68,535[d]

a R.I. State Public Welfare Commission, Annual Report, Bureau of Mothers' Aid, 1933 and 1935.
b Social Security Bulletin, Vol.2, #8, August, 1939.
c R.I. Welfare, State Department of Social Welfare, July, 1941.
d Ibid., May, 1943.

2 Statistics in file R.122, R.I. State Department of Social Welfare.

An analysis of these figures reveals that during the ten year period, although the case load has increased less than three times, the costs incurred by the State have become six times as large.

Causes of Dependency--Mothers' Aid--1933-1937. This discussion of amounts of average monthly grants and annual expenditures can now be supplemented with a discussion of the causes of dependency.

Table IV, page 43, represents causes of dependency for active cases under care in the Mothers' Aid program from 1933-1937. The terminology used throughout the reports is significant. All statements in Mothers' Aid statistics were made in relation to the mother.

Widows received the largest proportion of the grants, but the trend shows a steady decrease from eighty-one per cent in 1933 to seventy-three per cent in July, 1937. In continuing the study of this trend from July, 1938, to July, 1942, in Table V, page 45, the decrease from fifty-one per cent to twenty-four per cent is apparent. In contrast to this, it is noted that in 1933 (Table IV) eight per cent were divorced, deserted, or legally separated, and in July, 1942, (Table V) thirty-one per cent of all accepted applications were from such women.

Fathers who were incapacitated were considered only if they were incapacitated in a hospital--either a tuberculosis sanitarium or a mental hospital. Little was said of the incapacitated man in his own home, and as late as 1936 a report of the care of such men confined in hospitals was given, but no mention was made of them in connection with their own families.

During this period, not one case of illegitimacy was noted, and a thorough review of case loads does not reveal any active cases. In 1937 the largest number of loco parentis cases was found.

TABLE IV

CAUSES OF DEPENDENCY
ACTIVE CASES - MOTHERS' AID
1933-1937

Causes	1933		1934		1935		1936		1937	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Total	464	100.	513	100.	559	100.	570	100.	755	100.
Widows	376	81.0	408	79.0	437	78.1	443	77.4	551	73.2
Divorced	13	3.0	19	4.0	22	4.7	19	3.3	23	3.0
Deserted	23	5.0	29	5.0	30	4.3	30	5.3	54	7.3
Incapacitated husbands	38	8.0	44	8.0	57	10.3	63	11.5	91	11.0
Incarcerated	3	0.1	4	2.0	4	.7	5	1.0	7	1.7
Loco parentis	11	2.9	9	2.0	9	1.9	10	1.5	29	3.8

Source:- R.I. State Public Welfare Commission, Annual Reports, Bureau of Mothers' Aid, 1933-1937.

Causes of Dependency--ADC Accepted Applications--1937-1942. In considering Table V, page 45, it can be seen that the terminology is now in relation to the children and for the first time considers both parents. Stepparents as well as natural parents are now included.

The percentage of unmarried mothers receiving assistance has increased from one and six-tenths per cent in 1937-38 to five per cent in 1941-42. Whether this can be related to extensive interpretation of the program in all the areas or to the liberality of the policies can not be determined. In all probability, it is a combination of both.

The inclusion of twenty-six wives of service men in grants in 1942 shows a direct effect of the extension of social security legislation in regard to such women. This liberality on the part of the federal government began in 1941 before the war, when the State plan was expanded to include wives and children of the members of the National Guard. With the outbreak of war, this clause was substituted by the one in regard to the dependents of service men.

A distinction was made between the number of men in institutions and those incarcerated. This distinction, under the Mothers' Aid regulations, was based on the assumption that the program should include only persons requiring permanent care. If the father of a family was sentenced to prison for a fairly serious offense and thus for a long time, the family could be considered eligible. If, however, he was sentenced for six months or a year on a charge of drunkenness or non-support, the family was either given outdoor relief from the local director of public aid or a kind of indigent aid from the state department. Both kinds of assistance meant a very low standard of living and sometimes was much below any standards compatible with

TABLE V

CAUSES OF DEPENDENCY
ACCEPTED CASES-ADC 1938-1942

Causes	1938		1939		1940		1941		1942	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Total	245	100.	320	100.	268	100.	947	100.	893	100.
Both parents[a]	22	9.2	34	11.0	42	15.0	259	27.8	152	17.4
Natural parents	-	-	-	-	40		255		149	
Step parents	-	-	-	-	2		4		3	
With mother [b]	188	76.6	252	79.0	208	79.0	648	68.4	705	79.6
Unmarried	4	1.6	8	2.5	4	1.0	15	1.6	48	5.0
Dead	126	51.0	148	46.8	106	39.0	238	26.1	169	24.0
Divorced	17)	17.4	21	6.2	20	8.0	119	12.5	103)	31.0
Deserted	24)		28	8.9	23	9.0	84	8.7	178)	
Incapacitated	17	6.6	47	14.6	51	21.0	138	14.5	106	11.0
Incarcerated	-	-	-	-	4	1.0	54	5.0	73	6.8
Mil. Service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	1.8
With father [c]	2	0.9	1	0.4	4	1.0	7	0.7	1	0.7
Loco Parentis[d]	33	13.3	33	9.6	14	5.0	33	3.1	35	2.3

a b c d = total

Source:- R.I. Annual Reports to Social Security Board, File R-122, R.1, State Department of Social Welfare, 1938-1942.

decency and health.

The small but increasing number of children under care with step-parents is indicative of the policy of allowing grants to be made to such children in homes where step-parents are able but unwilling to support.

Discontinuances. In considering the Table VI on page 48, it is found that fifty-three per cent of all closings were because only one child remained dependent. Reasons such as "uncooperative" and "unfit" are no longer found. Mothers who were unfit were, in most cases, mothers who had had an illegitimate child.

The fact that thirty-four out of eighty-five cases were closed at the height of the depression, 1933-34, because of employment is significant. An analysis of this reveals that many of the mothers who were receiving assistance were able to work. These were placed on a work relief program and then transferred to WPA (Works Progress Administration). This was planned in the interest of conserving state funds for other mothers who could not work, who were particularly needed in their homes and who were receiving only small food orders from the local directors. The Bureau of Mothers' Aid was careful to find out that the family would not be harmed as a result of such action.[3]

Table VII reveals that seventy-two per cent of the cases closed in 1941-1942 were closed because of increased resources of relatives. This support from relatives and income from dependent children may be due to the fact that, although the allowances have increased, they are still not sufficient

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3 R.I. State Public Welfare Commission, Annual Report, Bureau of Mothers' Aid, 1935.

to care for the groups, and thus are almost forcing mothers to take employment in war industries. It may also indicate that grants which were made supplementary to wage incomes are no longer necessary because the employed member of the group is receiving higher wages and is able to meet the needs of the group without requesting further supplementation.

The fact that seven and six-tenths per cent of the closings were due to the return of incapacitated fathers to some form of gainful employment indicates that the Department's efforts to help with rehabilitation have been successful.

No fair hearings have been held under the Aid to Dependent Children program. The only appeal on record is one from a Director of Public Welfare who thought that a grant should be discontinued because he felt the income in the home was more than sufficient to meet the family's needs. No action for discontinuance was warranted and the grant remained.

The influence of the federal government on the compiling of statistics has meant that a great many more subdivisions in the reporting are now necessary. The statistics for several of the years included in Table VII have not been completed, and the cases classified as "other" include removals, transfers to other forms of public assistance and statements that the recipients were ineligible for the original grants.

In 1938 the report shows that ten cases were transferred to another form of assistance. In 1939, five were so transferred and the same number in 1940. This is sufficient to show that as late as 1940 some emphasis appeared to be on the category rather than on the recipient.

In 1941, no cases were closed because of the receipt of Survivors' Insurance and in 1942 only two. In June, 1943, twenty-nine ADC families

TABLE VI

REASONS FOR DISCONTINUANCE

1933-1937

Reasons	1933		1934		1935		1936		1937	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Total	90	100.	85	100.	68	100.	93	100.	51	100.
One dependent child	48	53.3	31	37.0	25	37.0	46	49.4	13	25.6
Remarried	9	10.0	5	6.0	8	12.0	12	13.0	11	21.5
Uncooperative	4	4.4	5	6.0	2	2.8	4	4.3	-	-
Unfit	3	3.6	-	-	3	4.2	6	6.4	2	3.9
Employed	19	21.9	34	40.0	24	35.8	16	17.2	18	35.3
Other	7	6.8	10	11.0	6	8.2	9	9.7	7	13.7

Source:- R.I. State Public Welfare Commission, Annual Reports, Bureau of Mothers' Aid, 1933-1937.

TABLE VII

REASONS FOR DISCONTINUANCES

1938-1942

Reasons	1938		1939		1940		1941		1942	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Total	92	100.	112	100.	186	100.	264	100.	427	100.
Resources	42	45.0	43	38.0	80	43.0	61	23.0	140	32.0
Support from relatives	-	-	-	-	-	-	114	44.0	152	37.0
Income of dependent children	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	4.9	14	3.1
Maximum age	8	8.6	25	22.3	42	22.0	12	4.5	16	3.8
Remarried	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	6.8	30	7.4
No longer incapacitated	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	4.0	33	7.6
Institution (child)	-	-	-	-	2	1.0	4	1.9	2	.1
Moved	4	4.4	-	-	1	0.6	4	1.9	7	1.2
Transferred	10	13.0	5	4.7	5	2.4	-	-	-	-
Other	28	29.0	39	35.0	56	31.0	32	9.0	33	7.8

Source:- R.I. Reports to Social Security Board, 1938-1942, R-122, R.I. State Department of Social Welfare.

received grants which were supplementary to Survivors' Insurance benefits.

Ages of the Children. At this time it is important to compare the ages of the children served under both programs. In July, 1932, ten per cent of the children were under five years of age. Sixty-seven per cent were between the ages of five and fourteen and twenty-three per cent were between fourteen and sixteen.[4]

In July, 1941, sixteen per cent were under five, sixty-four per cent between the ages of five and fourteen, and twenty per cent were over sixteen.[5]

In July, 1942, thirty per cent of the children were under five. Fifty-five per cent were between the ages of five and fourteen, and fifteen per cent were between fourteen and eighteen.[6]

A study of these figures reveals that in 1941 there was still difficulty in obtaining employment and children were apt to stay in school for a longer period and remain dependent longer. In 1942, although there is no proof, it may be that the effects of the war, increased employment and enlistments into the armed forces may be contributing factors in attempting to determine the reasons for the smaller percentage in the upper age group.

Case Loads. Under the Mothers' Aid program, case loads were extremely high. As late as 1936 each worker was supervising approximately 167 cases.[7] According to the statistics for June, 1943, each worker is now supervising approximately 110 cases. In some rural districts the numbers are higher.

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4 R.I. State Public Welfare Commission, Annual Report, Bureau of Mothers' Aid, July, 1932.

5 R.I. Department of Social Welfare, R-122, Statistics file, July, 1941.

6 Ibid., July, 1942.

7 R.I. Public Welfare Commission, Annual Report, Bureau of Mothers' Aid, July, 1936.

In those rural districts, the Child Welfare Services program has been operating, too, and has been supervising ADC families to the extent of thirty and nine-tenths per cent of its total case load. It is expected that these cases will be returned to the ADC department in that the administrators of Child Welfare expect to lay more stress on interpretation and prevention in the areas where that program is now established. When this plan becomes effective, the return of such cases to the respective districts will mean an increase in case loads there.

The Mothers' Aid law emphasized the educational aspects of the child's life and laid stress on all-round good health for the family. The Aid to Dependent Children program has not emphasized any one aspect of life, attempts to determine eligibility and render service, and, although the addition of workers to the staff has decreased the case load for each worker, it is hoped that even further decreases may be made.

It is impossible to state how many of these trends can be attributed directly to Social Security legislation alone. In considering any subject of this kind, the premise must be made that there is a multiple causal relationship and that no one factor can be singled out as the cause.

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CHAPTER IX

CURRENT PROCEDURES IN THE RHODE ISLAND AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN PROGRAM

Comparison of the Mothers' Aid and Aid to Dependent Children laws, the effects of Social Security legislation on the policies, structure and supervision, as well as on the trends of assistance have been made, and now an attempt to analyze the current Aid to Dependent Children program in operation will be made.

Rules and regulations can be made to appear well in print, but the administration of them and the spirit of this administration must be the governing factors.

Effective administration calls for continuous and careful supervision, as well as for flexibility of operation. In the operation of the entire Aid to Dependent Children plan in Rhode Island, there is evidence of this flexibility.

The State has subdivided its organization so that all procedures of operation emanate from a central office and are placed in operation in the localities under state supervision. The State has all the powers of administration, but in administering the program it has realized that unless the local directors are in agreement with the plans and the localities have some voice in what is being done, there can be no smoothness of operation.

Because "Three Centuries of Poor Law Administration"[1] have proved that

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1 Margaret Creech, Three Centuries of Poor Law Administration in Rhode Island, p. 248.

no permanent or satisfactory arrangement has ever been possible to achieve among local jurisdictions alone, the State has taken the leadership in administering this program. Care has been taken to do this in conjunction and cooperation with the next higher and the next lower levels of administration--the Social Security Board and the localities.

It has reached out into the field of operation of other state departments and has made use of the services of the Public Health Department for advice in compiling its "standards of assistance", as well as for obtaining obstetrical service for ADC mothers. It has emphasized the importance of making use of the other divisions within the same department of Social Welfare. This is particularly true in regard to psychometric and child welfare services, and has contributed to the case work practice by making such resources available.

It has required adequate presentation of proof where such is demanded in the statutes and plan, but the philosophy calls for flexibility of policies used in order to individualize treatment. It has hoped that this might have a tendency to preserve the integrity of the family and establish its confidence in the agency, as well as gaining recognition from the community on the basis of sound operation.

The entire plan has been built up slowly and could never have been built if the State had not been at a point of willingness to expand when Social Security legislation was first introduced. It seems to revolve around the idea that, "the state agency is an instrumentality set up in the midst of this social structure as a servicing agency, and its policies should, therefore, be controlled by these external factors, of which it is a part.

...the law should play its part in policy formulation and not merely in passing judgment on it."[2]

In order to carry out all the functions of the State Department as set up in the state plan, a carefully defined merit system has been organized. Such a system has advantages and disadvantages.

From the point of view of assets, it does provide for many things which were impossible under the patronage system. It provides for wider choice of personnel and insures, for the most part, continuity of service, making possible a long-time plan as well as concentrated effort on the part of the staff for self-development and development of case work techniques. It gives the general public a greater amount of confidence in the character and integrity of the service, and prevents partisan criticism on the part of any minority group.[3]

There are, however, distinct liabilities which should be mentioned.

> The basic purpose of this law was to create adequate sanction... to secure certainty and regularity in operation, and in the long run to substitute for caprice, some predictability of action under any given set of circumstances. A rule of law, uniform and general in its operation, was to be substituted for an essentially irregular, sporadic and capricious development.[4]

Although it should be remembered what the underlying principles in the law are, it does establish certain legal requirements which tend to reduce the flexibility of administration.

In accordance with this, it is found that often too great an amount of security, instead of stimulating the individual worker, may mean a lapse into

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2 A. Delafield Smith, The Need for Legal Concepts in the Formulation of Administrative Policy, June 4, 1941, p. 4.
3 Ibid., p. 5.
4 Ibid., p. 6.

a more mediocre type of work.

Social Security legislation does not stipulate what kind of merit system the states must devise, but the Social Security Board does demand that the highest type of efficiency result from whatever procedure is established. The Civil Service system in Rhode Island meets with the approval of the Board. It requires that the Department of Civil Service have the responsibility for standards of performance, merit rating, staff development, but if the Department of Social Welfare is not careful to make specifications for participating in compiling examinations and weightings for higher positions, desirable conditions may be excluded.

It is recognized, too, that many workers need further training for the positions, and it has been necessary for the Department of Social Welfare to plan for an in-service program for the new employees as well as a program from which all employees may benefit and keep currently informed of new policies and procedures. A rather uniform procedure, in operation throughout the State, has been inaugurated under the direction of the area and case work supervisors. In addition to this, plans can be made for educational leave for the purpose of attending a recognized School of Social Work. All these measures are intellectually stimulating to the workers and make for higher standards of efficiency.

It is evident that the Rhode Island program for Aid to Dependent Children has developed rapidly, but that expansion has not created "too serious growing pains" and no ill effects have developed. It has been guided by federal legislation and interpretation from the Social Security Board, and has used these as guides for as wide an extension of its services as possible.

Rhode Island has accepted and welcomed supervision from the Social

Security Board in regard to formulation of policies, and after each administrative review has submitted changes in plan of operation and has made use of constructive criticism offered by the reviewers. Until these reviews, the administration had not been aware of some of the evils in its administration or, if aware of them, was not sufficiently cognizant of the seriousness of them and their effect on the plan of operation to act constructively.

However, the program, while advancing, is in a constant state of change and experimentation. Therefore, the goal of any progressive and sound administration--as nearly as perfect a plan of operation as possible--is far from being attained. It would seem that only a scratch has been made on the surface of the field of constructive legislation.

There is evidence that until recently our preoccupation with the categories has distracted our attention from the needs of persons outside the categories.[5]

In the Rhode Island plan, we find that the proviso to care for any relative in the family (the incapacitated father, the child over eighteen who may still be in school or without income, the unborn child) is one of the first indications of the State's trend toward a fourth category. If this could be instituted in the Social Security Act, Rhode Island would benefit greatly by such a plan which would carry the possibility of federal reimbursement. More individuals might be assisted and certainly more money would be available to the State for special services to recipients.

Rhode Island would like to go a step farther in its procedures in regard to dependent children and would like to consider in its plan dependent

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5 Margaret Creech, Three Centuries of Poor Law Administration in Rhode Island, p. 247.

children living with a legal guardian who might be in need of financial assistance. However, the Social Security Board will not "permit" payment to guardians other than relatives unless that person is an adoptive parent.

It is now apparent what far reaching effects federal legislation has had on the Aid to Dependent Children program, and, whereas the State was in a position socially and financially to accept the provisions and not limit itself to any maxima, liberalization of Social Security legislation to a greater degree, to include more individuals, would have direct results, in all probability, in the administration of the Rhode Island program.

It would be a mistake to assume, however, that the Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children program is, in all respects, broader than the requisites stipulated in the federal plan. There are some points, as granting immediate assistance and provision for payment of grants retro-actively to the date of appeal, in cases of appeal resulting in change of grant, which have not yet been included. Broadening the Social Security Act would help Rhode Island in some ways, but there are still provisions of the federal plan which have not been adopted.

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of the facts obtained in this study has now led to a determination of the effects which Social Security legislation has had on the Aid to Dependent Children program in Rhode Island.

A comparison of the Mothers' Aid law with the present Aid to Dependent Children law reveals a change in emphasis in regard to actual content. The Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children law now stresses the child and not the mother. It considers such a child whether or not he is legitimate or illegitimate; whether or not he has a settlement within the State; whether or not he is a citizen; without regard for age (whether he is over eighteen or unborn); whether or not he is living with his own parents, step-parents or any relative, provided he is living in a home maintained by any of these, respectively; and, in its most recent amendment, whether or not he has a residence within the State.

The law provides a change in emphasis in placing responsibility for supervision and administration with the State Department of Social Welfare and not with the local Mothers' Aid or Aid to Dependent Children boards.

There is a change in emphasis in recognizing the child and any relative in respect to the child as an individual with individual rights. No restrictions are placed on the expenditures of money and there is a legal right to fair hearing if there is a feeling that injustice has been done.

This Aid to Dependent Children's law protects the child and his

relatives from exposure of confidential material in regard to him, and prevents such Poor Law practices as the publishing of names of recipients in public places.

The changes in emphasis in content of the law are important but are, perhaps, not nearly as significant as the changes in philosophy which are reflected in the entire discussion of policies. There is an improvement generally in the philosophy, and at least a conscious development toward a philosophy which provides the basis for improvement in the formulation of policies and procedures. There is a beginning awareness of recipients as people, not as members of a labeled group. The incapacitated father is not just another member of the family, but is maintained in his role as the head of that family. He may have the check in his name and may make plans with his physician and social worker for rehabilitation so that he may again become an employable member of society.

There is no distinction made between the illegitimate child, the stepchild, or the child living with some other relative. Neither is there any distinction made between the child whose father is in the home or the one whose father is absent from it.

Rhode Island administrators would like to progress farther in this direction to include the child who is in need and who is living with a guardian who is not a relative. The Social Security Board does not recommend this type of care, and therefore there would be no reimbursement.

In these extensions of its program, the Rhode Island plan approximates some phases of a foster home plan.

No encouragement is given to mothers to seek employment out of their homes, but an attempt is made to grant adequate amounts of assistance so

that such employment will not be necessary.

The maxima which are set in the "standards of assistance" for food, rent, fuel and clothing are only guides and can be increased with the approval of the area supervisor and the chief case work supervisor.

The policy of extending medical care indefinitely for hospital treatment or medication in the home shows progress toward a more adequate medical plan.

Statistics reveal that the Survivors' Insurance program has not affected the Rhode Island Aid to Dependent Children program to any great extent.

Other Social Security programs, as Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, Child Welfare Services and Maternal and Child Health, have influenced the progress of ADC by contributing direct services, as those given by Child Welfare Services and the Division of Maternal and Child Health, or cooperation in planning, as Old Age Assistance, which is integrated with Aid to Dependent Children.

There have been no fair hearings in Rhode Island in connection with Aid to Dependent Children. Prior to January, 1942, many of the grants were under budgeted because of the policy to hold to the excess of $12.00 monthly over the federally reimbursable maximum. During this period, no consideration was given to fathers or to children over eighteen. The lack of appeals may be due to the custom of accepting Mothers' Aid grants as they were given, and which may have been carried over into the Aid to Dependent Children program; or it may be attributed to the fact that, because there is not that whole area of relative's responsibility, which causes appeals in Old Age Assistance, there are no pressures for appeal.

With the advent of federal participation in the Rhode Island program,

Aid to Dependent Children became an integrated part of a public assistance program which included the program of Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, as well as general public assistance. It no longer remained a separate unity in a department of public welfare.

The Director of the Bureau of Mothers' Aid was maintained in the capacity of consultant for Aid to Dependent Children, thus safeguarding the strides which had been made in that program and assisting in the interpretation of it. Therefore, a complete reorganization in structure was not necessary when the program was first inaugurated. Decentralization into five main sub-divisions with centralization of disbursements was completed at the recommendation of the Social Security Board. To make this centralization more effective, some plan for immediate writing of checks by the area supervisors should be made. This would eliminate the waiting periods and would make for a more even flow of work.

The department's own provisions for case reviews need to be thought through more carefully, and there is need for some organized plan at the state level. The discrepancies in the average grants between areas might be an indication that greater interpretation of the "standards of assistance" in each area might be necessary. The State has welcomed supervision by the Social Security Board, and has used this, together with the administrative reviews, as guides toward a goal of continually higher standards of efficiency.

The study has shown a marked change in philosophy and in operation of the program from the point of view of liberalizing eligibility requirements in the law and in the policies. The policies of the Aid to Dependent Children program are set up on the basis of case work practices and individualized

treatment. They attempt to maintain the solidarity and the integrity of the family, if such is possible.

This study has shown what has been planned, to a lesser degree, for the individual child in regard to special needs of health and even more adequate assistance. It does indicate, however, an awareness on the part of the administrators of the necessity of combining liberality in eligibility requirements with liberality in meeting individual needs. What has been accomplished may serve as an indication of all that which is to come in the field of social welfare and, in particular, in the field of Aid to Dependent Children. When the whole long period of outmoded poor laws is considered for the State as a whole and in regard to children in particular, the advances which have been made in a short period of time are tremendous.

Approved:

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